

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): ~~Drum Tuning System comprised of~~ A drum tuning system for use in conjunction with conga, bongo or djembe drums, comprising:

(a) a rigid hook bolt;

(b) a brace ring; and

(c) a toggle clamp made of materials including but not limited to metal comprising a hinged lever handle connected to a base plate via an axle pin;

wherein the brace ring retains one end of the hook bolt and another end of the hook bolt is adjustably coupled to the toggle clamp handle.

Claims 2-3 (canceled)

Claim 4 (new): The drum tuning system of claim 1, the brace ring comprising a counterhoop and a plurality of hole tabs distributed equidistantly about the perimeter of the counterhoop, each hole tab comprising a tab and a hole within the tab, wherein the hole receives one end of the hook bolt.

Claim 5 (new): The drum tuning system of claim 1, the hook bolt comprising a hook portion on one end connected to a threaded rod portion on another end of the hook bolt.

Claim 6 (new): The drum tuning system of claim 1, wherein the toggle clamp includes a slot within the handle providing clearance for the hook portion of the hook bolt.

Claim 7 (new) The drum tuning system of claim 1, wherein the base plate includes means for attaching the toggle clamp to a drum body.

Claim 8 (new) A conga drum including the drum tuning system of claim 1.

Claim 9 (new): A drum incorporating a drum tuning system, the drum comprising:

- (a) a drum body having a top end and a bottom end;
- (b) a drum head overlying the top end of the drum body; and
- (c) a drum tuning system comprising:
 - (1) a brace ring seated on the drum head and disposed about the drum body;
 - (2) means for engaging the brace ring;
 - (3) means for pivoting one end of the engaging means away from the drum body, wherein the pivoting means is attached to the drum body; and
 - (4) means for adjusting tension applied by the engaging and pivoting means to the drum head via the brace ring.

Claim 10 (new): The drum of claim 9, the drum head further comprising a hoop secured to the periphery of the drum head and disposed about the drum body near the top end.

Claim 11 (new): The drum of claim 10, wherein the brace ring is seated on the drum head hoop.

Claim 12 (new) The drum of claim 9, wherein the engaging means includes a hook portion.

Claim 13 (new) The drum of claim 12, the brace ring including a plurality of hole tabs distributed equidistantly about the perimeter of the brace ring, each hole tab comprising a tab and a hole within the tab, wherein the hole receives the hook portion of the engaging means.

Claim 14 (new): The drum of claim 10, wherein the engaging means includes a threaded rod portion.

Claim 15 (new): The drum of claim 14, wherein the adjusting means includes a threaded fastener coupled to the threaded rod portion of the engaging means.

Claim 16 (new): A kit for retrofitting a drum with a drum tuning system, comprising:

- (a) a hook bolt comprising a hook portion connected to a threaded rod portion;

(b) a brace ring comprising a counterhoop and a plurality of hole tabs distributed equidistantly about the perimeter of the brace ring, each hole tab comprising a tab and a hole within the tab, each hole of sufficient size to receive the hook portion of the hook bolt; and

(c) a toggle clamp comprising a hinged lever handle connected to a base plate via an axle pin.

Claim 17 (new) The kit of claim 16, further comprising a nut sized to fit the threaded rod portion of the hook bolt.

Claim 18 (new) The kit of claim 16, wherein the handle includes a slot within the handle of sufficient size to provide clearance for the hook bolt.